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IN THIS ISSUE:

Yun Su Gil Faces Deportation
Sinnott's Report on ROK Situation
WCC Report
Miscellaneous News
Clippings from the Japanese Press

KOREAN FACES DEPORTATION, IMPRISONMENT, DEATH

Yun Su Gil's 14-year battle against deportation from Japan ended this week when the Japanese Supreme Court upheld a Tokyo High Court ruling against him. The 45-year-old Korean, a Japan resident since 1951, has actively promoted Korean unification and opposed the Park government's attitude towards Korean human rights. He faces almost certain imprisonment and a probable death sentence upon return to Korea.

The story begins in 1951, when the student Yun Su Gil passed a highly competitive examination in Korea and was awarded a scholarship to study in Japan. With the sudden outbreak of the Korean War Yun's study plans were cancelled, so without permission to enter the country, he crossed the Japan Sea in a small fishing boat. He arrived illegally in April of 1951, and pursued postgraduate studies at prestigious Tokyo University for two years.

On leaving the university Yun became friends with Cho Yung Su, an activist in the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan -- generally pro-south Korea). They actively promoted the reunification of north and south Korea. Returning to Korea, Cho was imprisoned and sentenced to death by the Park government for implication in an anti-Government incident. Yun launched a movement in Japan to save his friend's life and also wrote a protest note to the Seoul government.

In 1962 the Immigration Office accused Yun of illegal entry and residence in Japan, and ordered him to leave. Since then Yun has been fighting the deportation order in court, appealing as a political criminal for asylum in Japan.

The Tokyo District Court supported this view, ruling in his favor in 1969. The court pointed to the near certainty of imprisonment and even death facing Yun

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IT HURTS

OUCH!!! The Japan Postal System has finally gained Diet approval for a general rise in postal rates --- JCAN's postage bill doubles this month. To maintain our ratio of income to expenses (subscriptions pay about 30% of the cost of JCAN production) we are being forced to pass along the increase in postage and in paper and printing costs to our readers. From February a 1-year subscription within Japan will be ¥2700, external seamail \$10, airmail Asia \$11, airmail Europe, North and South America and Africa \$12. We especially regret that these increases will have to effect long-term subscriptions now on our books. We will adjust them as of February to take the new rates into account, and as a result will be sending out Renew slips earlier than was scheduled. We tried several other ways to get around the problem before we were reduced to this; we hope you'll understand. ---Eds.

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in Korea, and said that deportation was against the international common law which protects political criminals from extradition.

This ruling was reversed four years later by the Tokyo High Court. It ruled international common law would apply only if an arrest warrant had been issued by the south Korean government, and that in this case deportation and extradition are not equivalent. Further, although non-extradition of political criminals is supported by many countries, it does not have the force of an international legal obligation, the court said. The Supreme Court upheld this view, adding that it was not objectively certain Yun would be punished as a political criminal if deported.

Japanese law scholars are divided over the court's decision. Shigeki Miyazaki, Professor of Law at Meiji University, called for Japan to honor international common law and grant refuge to Yun, but other influential voices here have supported the court ruling.

Meanwhile, a reliable Christian source speaking for Koreans in Japan told JCAN the basic issue is one of human rights. "Yun entered Japan illegally and so broke immigration laws. But he is thinking only about the good of his country, fighting the Park government from outside because no dissent is permitted within. If your government is oppressive, it is only natural to oppose it." Suspicions are strong here that the Japanese government is refusing refuge in order to improve relations -- recently strained -- with the Seoul government.

"Japan is an economically advanced country -- I had thought the legal system would be advanced, too," a tired Yun told the *Asahi Shimbun* after the trial. "But it appears that the Japanese and south Korean governments are united in oppressing the Korean resistance."

Supporters are now writing letters and telegrams on behalf of Yun to the Immigration Office, which has not yet initiated official deportation proceedings. Negotiations are underway through Amnesty International to admit Yun to a third country, probably Sweden, in the likelihood that he is deported from Japan. However, supporters point out that removal to a third country, while saving Yun's life, would all but stop his anti-Park activities which have so embarrassed both Tokyo and Seoul.

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"SPEAK OUT"

--Father Sinnott's Report on the South Korean Situation--

"There is freedom of religion in south Korea. That is if you accept the definition in Romans 13:1 'Every person must submit to the supreme authorities. There is no authority but by act of God, and the existing authorities are instituted by him ...'" reported Father James Sinnott. Sponsored by the Japan-Korean Christian Liaison Committee, the Maryknoll priest is on a lecture-seminar series in Japan, reporting on the present situation in south Korea. Sinnott was a missionary for 15 years in the Republic of Korea until last April when he was deported for involvement in activities supporting political prisoners.

Having returned to the United States, he has spent much of his time working for the improvement of human rights in south Korea. Father Sinnott talked with State Department officials Daniel O'Donohue and Owen Zerhollen about conditions there. However, they insisted that there was freedom in south Korea and that the U.S. does not interfere in the domestic policies of other countries. At that point Sinnott gave up on the State Department and has been concentrating his efforts on

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SINNOTT (cont'd)

the U.S. Congress where he feels there is hope for effecting some change in American foreign policy which he sees as the source of the problems in Seoul.

Donald Fraser's subcommittee on human rights has been very active on the Korean problem. This has caused concern over his re-election to Congress this year. Sinnott reported that there is south Korean money in Minnesota which is being used to try to defeat Fraser. Reportedly farmers are being offered favorable grain deals in exchange for promises to oppose Fraser in the election. In addition, followers of the well-known Reverend Moon are actively campaigning in Minnesota against Fraser, Father Sinnott said.

Other Congressmen actively concerned over human rights' issues include Michael Harrington (Mass.), Don Riegel (Mich.), Leo Ryan (Calif.), and Morris Udall. Senators Kennedy, Cranston, Humphrey, McGovern and Abourzek are all involved in the human rights' problems.

Congress is having a hard time making any changes in American foreign policy due to pressure from the State Department which sees south Korea as the stable element in the East Asian security picture. Thus, the priest said, 33,000,000 people are denied their basic human rights in order to protect that security. Sinnott also pointed out that 80% of all foreign investment in south Korea is Japanese. America is taking all the criticism about suppression while Japan quietly reaps all the profits.

Sinnott feels that since America is partially accountable for the situation in south Korea, Americans have a responsibility to help improve conditions. "Any sudden change, including a sudden withdrawal of troops, would be immoral," the ex-missionary said. "However, there is a need for change." He recommended that people make use of the democratic system and the free press. Pressure can be brought on governments by speaking out against atrocities such as the execution of the alleged members of the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP).

The need to speak out is not just the responsibility of governments and journalists, but also individuals and churches. South Koreans are making themselves heard in spite of risking imprisonment and torture. Quoting U.S. authorities in Seoul, the priest said that 5 students were recently arrested in Seoul for distributing Kim Chi Ha's "Declaration of Conscience."

"The Church is supposed to live by faith, and this doesn't just mean the little guy," said Sinnott. He feels that it is very dangerous for the Church to live by supporting those in power and then when there is a change jumping in the next boat. The priest reiterated that it was most definitely in the realm of religious work to fight for basic human rights and to speak out against the torture of students and others.

Sinnott's role now includes disseminating information that he receives from south Korea. He was the one who first received Kim Chi Ha's "Declaration of Conscience." He also received word that the remaining alleged members of the PRP have been transferred from Seoul to prisons in the southern part of the country and placed in solitary confinement. It should be noted that none of the prisons are heated during the cold Korean winters.

Sinnott concluded his talk by saying that silence is the best friend of Park Chung Hee and that he prays for those who are silent. "What are we risking to speak out?"

ANNOUNCING--the 1976 Kyodan Related Missionary Conference in Gotemba, March 30 - April 1. Non-Kyodan-related people welcome. Relationships of Christian schools, Christian Social Work League and Kyodan. Afternoon discussions on mission in Japan, world hunger, women's rights, roles of the missionary, others.

SLIDES TELL THE STORY OF KOREANS IN JAPAN

The powerful slide show and sound track, "Let My People Go," is now available in English and Japanese through the Research and Action Institute of Koreans in Japan. Opening with the question, "What can Christians and the church do in the world today?" the narrative first sketches the history of the Korean minority in Japan. It goes on to show the significance of Park Chong Suk's struggle for employment at Hitachi Co. (See JCAN #449, Mar. 8, 1974 and following.) The 20-minute show provides a particularly good introduction to the Korean situation in Japan for interested groups with little previous knowledge. The language is subdued; the message comes through strongly.

The English-language version was originally prepared for the World Council of Churches conference in Nairobi, where it was well received. The original in English or Japanese can be rented from the RAIK office for ¥1,000 per week, or copies can be ordered at \$35 per set plus postage. The English version, slightly longer to provide more historical background, contains slides and soundtrack. The Japanese set also includes a book on the situation of Koreans in Japan. Contact RAIK, Korean Christian Church in Japan, Japan Christian Center, Room 52, 3-18, Nishiwaseda, 2-chome, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160.

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MORE REPORTS FROM NAIROBI

Last week John Nakajima shared with readers his reaction to the World Council of Churches General Assembly. This week we hear from two more Japanese participants.
---Eds.

Although crucial social and political issues were presented, an atmosphere of quiet prevailed at the November Assembly, according to Masao Takenaka, a professor at Doshisha University who went to Nairobi as an advisor. The participants mostly stayed with general issues rather than bringing up the particular problems of certain countries. Not only did the African churches remain silent, but participants from all developing nations were generally reluctant to speak freely. He lists several reasons. First, political repression in several developing countries prevented some Christian leaders from attending. Some are in political exile or prison, others were not given exit permits. And Africans pointed out their leadership lacks Assembly-type experience, as governments changing with coup d'etat suddenness make it difficult to leave the country for fear of sudden internal political changes.

Second, 80 percent of the Nairobi participants were newcomers, at a WCC Assembly for the first time. This resulted in a broad range of issues and placed limitations on the decision-making process. However, there was also a conscious sharing of reunited worship in a polarized world.

The Assembly centered on human rights, liberty and dignity for human beings as the focal point of Christian service and witness, Takenaka emphasizes. He also points up the Assembly emphasis on dialogue. In the geographical East, ideological dialogue is necessary to keep churches from becoming isolated and ingrown. In the confessional East, the Orthodox churches place stress on dialogue with other religious traditions. Lastly, the political East feels the need for dialogue with Marxists. And there are common feelings of the necessity for dialogue among all of these.

Nearly 20% of the voting delegates at Nairobi were women, a far higher number than at previous WCC Assemblies. Much of this increased participation was made possible through funds raised by Christian women around the world over the last

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two years. One delegate sponsored by this international fund-raising was Michiko Okuda, who attended Nairobi representing the United Church of Christ in Japan. She uses her Assembly experience to look forward, suggesting several priorities for the Japanese church in coming years.

The number of Christians in Japanese society is so small that the local churches are not likely to move the Japanese nation by themselves, Okuda feels. Instead, the Christian's responsibility is to find places in society where she or he can carry out God's work in cooperation with non-Christian groups. In a society where one gains economic success by keeping silent about companies' unconscionable profit-making, the function of the church should be to offer a community of struggle to those who go into the world as instruments of God. We should be concerned not only with the needs of the local church, but with the relation of these localized problems to the world community. "The church is a sign of human unity," she says, linking every Christian in the world to every other Christian.

---Aiko Carter

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THEOLOGICAL SYMPOSIUM HELD ON YASUKUNI STRUGGLE

Before the war February 11 was celebrated in Japan as the date that Emperor Jimmu, the legendary first emperor and original ancestor of the present Imperial Family, created the Japanese islands. The holiday was abolished by Occupation forces following Japan's defeat in 1945, but surfaced again under a slightly different name in 1967. Various non-Shinto religious organizations as well as citizens' groups continue to protest the holiday, calling it one more step on the return towards Japanese militarism. This year protesters will gather at Yomiuri Hall on February 11 at 1:30. The theme is: Yasukuni; Free Us from the Emperor System.

---Eds.

With February 11 approaching, the members of the NCCJ Ad-hoc Committee on Yasukuni met on January 15. The committee, in the front line of opposition to nationalization of Yasukuni Shrine, discussed members' respective theological bases in the struggle. It turned out to be a casual and friendly symposium backed by "high-level" theological discussion. The gathering drew about 35 participants, mostly members of the Ad-hoc Committee.

Committee members at the meeting evaluated the following points highly:

- Denominational differences and characteristics were spelled out in black and white, with concrete examples.
- Catholic participants explained their traditional understanding of consoling the dead.
- The topics of war responsibility of the church and of the church-Emperor system relation were common concerns among all the churches.

At the meeting the Church of Christ in Japan (Nikki -- Japanese Presbyterian) focused confessionally on examining what the church is and how churches in Japan are related to the original sources of the Reformation. Kyodan members started with their own denomination's war responsibility, then moved on to define true ecumenism. It is not, they said, sliding over differences for the sake simply of doing something together. Instead, they called for coming face to face in a more dynamic working together for one common goal.

The Japan Baptist Convention, speaking from their principle of church autonomy, said churches must strive to grasp the Gospel as it confronts the quasi-deity in the Emperor system. The Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church pointed out that Lutheran churches in Japan exist to try to differentiate between divine and worldly justice.

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This can be encountered in searching for the relationship between their Confession of Faith and the Yasukuni struggle.

Although the gathering was intended to be a retreat from everyday anti-Yasukuni activities, such reports reminded the participants of difficult times ahead. Despite the New Year recess, pro-nationalization forces have been lobbying hard at the LDP Cabinet committee level with an eye toward the upcoming Diet session. Meanwhile the Association of War-Bereaved Families is leading a petition offensive, and the National Council to Accomplish Nationalization of Yasukuni Shrine has initiated action to generate a new national organization.

---Akiko Yamaguchi

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CLIPPINGS FROM THE JAPANESE PRESS

compiled by C. Koriyama

CHILDREN FLYING KITES-----Lively children flying colorful kites with their dangling tails fluttering in the cold wind are a typical Japanese winter scene, but this winter things are a little different. Instead of the traditional Japanese kites made of slender bamboo rods and "washi" (Japanese paper), imported vinyl kites seem to be occupying the winter skies throughout the nation this season.

These imported kites are said easy to fly and durable. They are selling like hot cakes. However, it is quite boring to see all the children flying kites of the same size and design at almost the same altitude. Children themselves seem to become tired of such standardized kites.

Japanese children used to make their own kites; the smaller ones got help from their fathers. Using knives, they split bamboo poles to make slender rods, which were crossed and tied with threads into frames of varying shapes. The frames were covered with "washi" on which were painted drawings and words of their choice.

Today, bamboo and "washi" are difficult to obtain in cities, and urban children generally are not taught how to use knives. They instead prefer to buy ready-made goods, which does not seem to bother their parents. As a result, most toys on the market today, including kites, are finished goods which are exquisite to look at but mass-produced at factories. Every child plays with toys of the same design. This may be one of the reasons why modern children seem to have lost their distinctive individuality.

POPULATION STABILIZES-----Japan entered an era of stability in 1975, according to preliminary population statistics released recently by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Birth and mortality rates were among the lowest registered during the past 100 years. The marriage rate also declined, while the divorce rate showed an increase.

The number of births in 1975 totaled 1,900,000, the first time in five years that the number dropped below the 2,000,000,000 mark. The birth rate (the number of live births per thousand population) was 17.2, which is the second lowest figure after 17 recorded in 1962. Excluded was 1966, the year of "Hinoe Uma," when the birth rate was unusually low. A superstition persists that females born in that year are destined to live an unhappy life. The drop in the birth rate in 1975 is believed due to the trend among young couples to have no more than two children.

Divorce cases, however, increased by 5,400 over those a year ago to hit an all-time high of 119,000. The divorce rate (the number of divorces per thousand population) rose from 1.04 a year ago to 1.08.

(Asahi Shimbun)